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To: gterry@bakersfieldpd.us
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PERF Daily Clips - June 11, 2019

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MENTAL ILLNESS

Los Angeles Times: Police know the mentally ill need more than handcuffs. Their response is shifting

Police interactions with mentally ill people typically happen when everything else has failed. When therapy, counseling and education have been tried; when antipsychotic drugs lose their efficacy or patients stop taking them; when families can no longer manage the care of the patients themselves and relapses occur, somebody calls 911, and police officers respond.

It's a situation with a well-documented risk of violence. More than one-third of the people shot by L.A. police officers in 2015 had documented signs of mental illness. And a Washington Post analysis of lethal police shootings in 2016 found that more than one-quarter of victims were mentally ill.

But the risk of violence also exists if the police are not called, in the form of injury to family members or caregivers who are attempting to manage a mental health crisis on their own.

Officers responding to a mental health call have to balance criminal law, patient rights, patient safety, their own safety, the safety of the patient's family members. Police aren't always the best people for the job, said Jim Smith, Monterey Park police chief and chairman of an L.A. County task force on mental illness and homelessness.

But Smith says there's been a recent shift in the way police departments in Southern California police the mentally ill.

Over the last few years, governments have invested heavily in emergency mental health resources. Five mental health urgent care centers have been established across the county, with a sixth one coming to La Puente, Smith said. A dedicated psychiatric emergency response

team now gives family members who are afraid to call police a number other than 911. And 39 teams across the county staffed with a police officer and a mental health professional act as "second responders" for cases involving mentally ill people.

TECHNOLOGY

New York Times: Op-ed by NYPD Commissioner James O'Neill: How facial recognition makes you safer

Technology has improved the profession beyond what the most imaginative officer could have conceived in 1983, when I was sworn in as a police officer. These innovations include facial recognition software, which has proved its worth as a crime-fighting resource since we adopted it in 2011. But the technology has also raised concerns about privacy, so the public should know how the New York Police Department uses its system - and the safeguards we have in place.

PURSUIT POLICIES

Minneapolis Star Tribune: After string of dangerous chases, Minneapolis police rethink policy on pursuits

Minneapolis police are weighing new guidelines that would limit when and how officers can chase a suspect after a string of high-speed police pursuits that ended in crashes involving injuries and even death.

The debate comes after vehicle pursuits jumped about 25% from 2016 to 2018. Most were over quickly and lacked the headline-grabbing drama of chases in which bystanders were struck and killed by someone fleeing arrest. But many more result in property damage.

"In my opinion, there's not a large number of crimes, or types of crimes, that warrant pursuing unless there's some sort of danger to the public," said Assistant Police Chief Mike Kjos, one of the biggest champions of the proposed change.

Following a series of dangerous pursuits last winter, he fired off an angry e-mail ordering officers to avoid chasing suspects for all but the most serious offenses. Authorities say the number of pursuits has slowed in the first half of 2019 in the wake of Kjos' order, issued while he was acting inspector on the North Side.

Kjos remembers a case earlier in his career when a supervisor overruled his decision to call off a pursuit of an apparently suicidal woman. It ended in the death of a pedestrian - a memory that has always stuck with him, Kjos says.

In a recent interview, Kjos said officers must balance the risks before beginning a pursuit. Officers, he said, can develop tunnel vision during a chase, failing to check for other vehicles and pedestrians, because it's "in their DNA" to catch and lock up criminals.

"Which then makes it difficult to tell yourself, 'I need to stop right now,' " he said.

HOMELESSNESS

Las Vegas Sun: Program helps family get off Las Vegas streets, offers hope

Soon after they relocated to Las Vegas last fall, a couple and their two children began sleeping in a tent in a desert lot for up to two weeks at a time. They didn't have a choice; they had no home.

If sleeping outside without a shower was tough enough for the couple, they had to worry about Xavier, their 5-year-old nonverbal son with Down syndrome, and Xeryn, his outgoing 7-year-old sister.

Their children kept Clarence Nolen, 42, and his wife, Heather Sullivan, 32, grounded, he said. If it wasn't for them, the couple said, they might have given up. So, when Metro Police approached them about a month ago offering a lifeline, they instantly accepted.

Within 30 days, the now mostly self-sufficient couple had a two-bedroom apartment of their own on the historic west side of the city, thanks in part to the Mobile Crisis Intervention Team.

The team combines Metro officers and Help of Southern Nevada staffers who patrol Clark County streets looking for the needy.

JUVENILES

NBC 4 Los Angeles: LAPD debuts youth mentoring program using minibikes

Police have a new tool in their efforts to mentor Los Angeles youth: minibikes.

The Los Angeles Police Department demonstrated its new program "National Youth Project Using Minibikes" Saturday at the off-road training course of the LAPD Davis Training Academy in Granada Hills, officials said.

Officers at the LAPD's Valley Traffic Division plan to mentor youth ages 10 through 17 by teaching them to ride minibikes as a way of teaching them to overcome their daily challenges, LAPD officials said. It is seen as a way to help youth develop self-confidence, decision making, teamwork, risk management and other valuable life skills.

LGBT ISSUES

New York Times: The story behind the police commissioner's handwritten Stonewall apology

Faced with a renewed call last week to apologize for the 1969 raid on the Stonewall Inn, the

New York Police Department proclaimed that the "N.Y.P.D. of today is much different than the department of 50 years ago." It alluded to "important changes" made to "bring the police and all the communities we serve closer together."

What it did not do was offer any acknowledgment of wrongdoing or regret for the raid that led to days of street protests, a seminal moment that galvanized the modern gay rights movement.

Shortly after the statement's release, the city's police commissioner, James P. O'Neill, had misgivings. "Through the afternoon and through the night," Mr. O'Neill recalled, "I knew we had to do more."

He began scribbling a full-throated apology on notecards, and kept them in his breast pocket. He told no one what he was writing, drafting it longhand, on the fly. No call to the mayor. No high-level meetings.

"I wanted it to be my words," Mr. O'Neill said in his first public reflections on delivering the apology. "If we're going to move forward as a police department and as a city, the past has to be acknowledged."

SCHOOLS

Pensacola News Journal: Nearly 200 Florida schools don't have armed security. Now, those districts may get called out

After a state commission found out Wednesday that nearly 200 schools - including many charter schools - have not had armed security as required by state law, commissioners urged the Florida Department of Education to "name names and name people" to try to force compliance.

Within two hours, Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran agreed to publicly name non-compliant school districts at a news conference if they do not comply with all school-safety mandates by Aug. 1.

The commission's outrage about non-compliance was fueled after it learned the results of a survey conducted by the state, in which school districts answered with the promise of anonymity. The survey showed that 10 of Florida's 67 school districts failed to have full-time guards or law-enforcement officers at every school this year.

GUN REGULATIONS

Reuters: Supreme Court rebuffs bid to expand legal protections for gun silencers

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday turned away a bid to widen legal protections for gun silencers in a case involving two Kansas men convicted for failing to register the devices as required by federal law, as the justices again sidestepped a chance to rule on the scope of the

right to bear arms.

The justices declined to hear appeals by the two men, Shane Cox and Jeremy Kettler, and left in place their convictions in cases brought by federal prosecutors. The men had asked the court to decide whether silencers - muzzle attachments that suppress the sound of a gunshot - are covered by the U.S. Constitution's Second Amendment, which protects the right to keep and bear arms.

The court's action came in the aftermath of a May 31 mass shooting in the Virginia coastal city of Virginia Beach in which a gunman who killed 12 people used weapons including a handgun equipped with a silencer.

Washington Post: He always hated women. Then he decided to kill them.

In 2018 the Southern Poverty Law Center added a new category to its tracking list of hate movements around the country: male supremacy.

The term encompasses a worrying new array of assaults by men who view women as genetically inferior, inherently treacherous or unwilling to provide them with the sex and submission they see as their birthright.

It's a trend with roots both ancient and new. Condemning women as a gender dates to at least the ancient Greek myth that blamed Pandora for unleashing evil into the world. But in the digital age, misogyny is being stoked within hundreds of online chat rooms and forums, echo chambers of grievance that drive some men to cyberbullying and a far smaller number to violence.

The FBI began tracking hate crimes against women in 2013, though the agency's statistics have long been plagued by major inconsistencies in the ways thousands of police departments around the country define and report hate crimes. In 2017, the most recent year available, the FBI tallied 24 attacks against women based on their gender - a tiny percentage of hate crimes overall.

But researchers say many incidents go unreported by police or by women themselves, and they expect more attacks in the future, spurred by the cross-pollination among aggrieved men and broader hate movements.

POLICE EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

Redmond (WA) Reporter: Redmond Chief Wilson hangs up the badge

Redmond Police Chief Kristi Wilson has spent 32 years in law enforcement - 26 of those years patrolling in the city of Redmond. Now she's saying goodbye as she transitions from her life at the department into a more leisurely state of retirement this month.

During the City Council meeting on June 4, Wilson was recognized for her many years of

service. She was one of the first female officers hired in Redmond and worked her way up from patrol to police chief.

Redmond Mayor John Marchione said it was a pleasure to work with Wilson as she has held many roles at the department. Wilson has also been the acting interim public works director.

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